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an agreement, and the criticism of the Liberal chief upon his Conservative opponent is that he has no respect for tradition! The home-rule agitation that followed evoked more bitter feelings, but each leader had, and showed, a real respect for the other.

Mr. Morley has given us an instructive study in these and other aspects of political life. He does not profess impartiality; in this respect the biographer has more license than the historian. He is a master of style ranking now with such a veteran as Mr. Goldwin Smith, and he has corrected his work so carefully that mistakes are not easily found. We may note that the army allowed by Napoleon to Prussia was 42,000 and not 40,000 (II. 349), and there is a confusion of persons on the last line of Volume II., page 552.

The "brazen glories of war" find little place in the book. In view of vehement controversies, Mr. Morley's statement is interesting that Mr. Gladstone took no personal part in the sending to the Soudan of General Gordon, and that he never saw that hero. Posterity will probably say that Mr. Gladstone showed too great facility in convincing himself and others in regard to new measures, "that what they took for a yawning gulf was in fact no more than a narrow trench that any decent political gymnast ought to be ashamed not to be able to vault over" (III. 185). None the less does this able and frank exposition convince us of the truth of Mr. Spurgeon's fine tribute: "We believe in no man's infallibility, but it is restful to be sure of one man's integrity" (II. 531).

To each volume is added a helpful chronology of Mr. Gladstone's activities.

GEORGE M. WRONG.

*Benjamin Disraeli: an Unconventional Biography.* By WILFRID MEYNELL. (New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1903. Pp. xxi, 520.)

THE publication of Morley's *Life of Gladstone* and the recent renewal of the protectionist agitation have combined to arouse public interest in the career of Lord Beaconsfield. Mr. Meynell's study, then, is timely; it is also interesting and suggestive; but unfortunately it does not meet our needs. The life of the great Conservative statesman, or adventurer, if you prefer, has yet to be written. The many so-called biographies that have appeared from time to time are, for the most part, mere political manifestos, either bitter vituperations or flattering panegyrics. To Macknight (1854) and O'Connor (1879) Disraeli is the unscrupulous Jewish adventurer, the personification of inconsistency. The characters in his novels, especially his villains, are quoted to prove that he was a worthy disciple of Machiavelli. The lives by Mill (1863) and Hitchman (1879) are just as prejudiced in the other direction. Froude's volume in "The Queen's Prime Ministers" series contains some suggestive material, but it was written without adequate preparation and is characterized by the author's usual pessimism. Bryce's study is thorough, and it is convincing, provided the reader is a worshiper at the Gladstone

shrine ; but it is merely an essay, not a biography. Perhaps the best life which has yet appeared is that by Georg Brandes, the eminent Danish critic, which was translated into English in 1880. The works of Keibel and Cuheval-Clarigny are also valuable. The death of Lord Rowton has unfortunately delayed the writing of an authorized biography of Beaconsfield, but it is rumored that some one, probably Sir Herbert Maxwell, will soon take charge of his papers and complete the work.

Meynell describes his book as "an unconventional biography", "a cross-breed . . . between biography and autobiography". Quotations from Beaconsfield's conversations, speeches, letters, and novels are followed by comments in the author's breezy style. One of the sections dealing with Gladstone, for example, is introduced by the question "What is the difference between a misfortune and a calamity?", which somebody once asked of Disraeli. The reply was, "Well, if Gladstone fell into the Thames, that would be a misfortune ; and if anybody pulled him out, that, I suppose, would be a calamity." Disraeli's famous characterization of Gladstone as "a sophistical rhetorician inebriated by the exuberance of his own verbosity and gifted with an egotistical imagination that at all times commanded an interminable and inconsistent series of arguments to malign his opponents and justify himself" (p. 466) is interesting and essentially Disraelian, but the reviewer can see no reason why it should be repeated on page 497. This and many similar cases of repetition could easily have been avoided, if the author had made his own index.

The book is an admirable study of Disraeli the man, of his home life, his dinner parties, his friendships, his hatred of lawyers, his fondness for gay waistcoats, his admiration of South German art, and the like. Scattered here and there throughout the volume are also various references to his public career, but the reader will be disappointed if he expects to find anything like a consistent, logical treatment. Certain controverted questions are taken up and discussed in great detail, always with the idea of placing Disraeli in the most favorable light. The defense of his conduct in the quarrel with Daniel O'Connell, however, is by no means convincing (pp. 204-250). About all that Meynell succeeds in proving is that the O'Connell-Hume letters of recommendation (1832) were written, not at Disraeli's personal request, but through the mediation of his friend Bulwer-Lytton. He makes out a better case, however, in the Peel-Disraeli controversy (pp. 294-340). The traditional Whig account of Disraeli's application to Sir Robert for office and of his repulse is correct, but to represent that as the primary cause of the breach is puerile. The differences were based upon principle, not upon personal antagonism. Disraeli was consistent, while Peel permitted himself to be led by Cobden and Bright away from the old Tory principles of protection. Therein lies the secret of Disraeli's success. When Peel disrupted his party by supporting the repeal of the corn-laws, Disraeli stepped into the breach as the champion of the agricultural interest, and by sheer force of ability worked his way to the top. As

Bryce well says, the task was made easy because there has always been a dearth of brains in the Tory party. If Disraeli had been a Whig, he would have found many rivals, but as a Tory he had a free field.

It has often been said that Disraeli was inconsistent. But what English statesman of his day was not? On that score he will certainly compare favorably with Gladstone or with the Sage of Birmingham. Even in the O'Connell case, although we must admit that he was ungrateful, we can hardly accuse him of inconsistency. The fight for Catholic emancipation and for parliamentary reform almost completely destroyed the old party lines. Disraeli in 1832 was neither a Whig nor a Tory; he was simply a Radical. As such he sought and secured the assistance of O'Connell, who was himself estranged from the Whigs at that time. When the parties began to settle again along their old lines, O'Connell saw fit to rejoin the Whigs, whereas Disraeli became a Tory. He was, though, as Meynell says, always a Radical Tory. Like the Pitts, he hated the aristocracy which had controlled the Whig party throughout its career, and which in his own day was securing too great influence among the Tories. He democratized the Tory party, prevented it from deserting entirely the principles of protection, and started it on its career of imperialism. When he made his sarcastic comment on Joseph Chamberlain's first speech, that "he wore his eye-glass like a gentleman", he would have been greatly surprised to know that within a quarter of a century Chamberlain would be following in his footsteps and fighting the battle for the preservation of the British Empire.

W. ROY SMITH.

*Autobiography of Seventy Years.* By GEORGE F. HOAR. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1903. Two vols., pp. ix, 434; viii, 493.)

THE autobiography of Senator Hoar is a delightful book to read, filled with anecdote and humor, permeated with cheerfulness and optimism, honest, direct, and enthusiastic — in short, exactly what one would expect from its honored author. In scope the work is rather narrower than many of the other important autobiographical writings of the past few years, such as Blaine's *Twenty Years of Congress*, Sherman's *Recollections*, and the books of McCulloch and Boutwell in the same field; for it does not deal with the history of the United States in any sense, but simply with the career of George F. Hoar. Since this was almost wholly legislative, events of a military or administrative character are ignored, and the resulting limitation of subject adds greatly to the unity of interest of the work. The first chapters deal with the author's ancestry, boyhood, and school-days — in many respects they are the most graphic and entertaining in the two volumes — and are followed by a narrative of Mr. Hoar's career in the stormy state politics of Massachusetts during the Free-soil movement. Then comes the history of Mr. Hoar's legislative services, first in the House of Representatives and later in the Senate, to